

REMARKS

By the above actions, claims 1 and 13 have been amended. In view of these actions and the following remarks, further consideration of this application is requested.

At the outset, the undersigned wishes to thank the Examiner for his courteous and open-minded consideration of the points raised at a personal interview conducted on March 25, 2008, and during which, as reflected on the Interview Summary, the Examiner agreed that the finality of the last Office Action would be withdrawn since claim 18 was not addressed in the Office Action. Thus, it is understood that this Amendment will be entered and a new Office Action issued in response thereto. The substance of the discussions with respect to the patentability of the claims is reflected below in connection with the comments presented relative to the outstanding rejections.

With regard to the rejection of claims 1-17 under 35 USC § 112, the indefinite term "generally" has been replaced by term "substantially" that has been judicially recognized as acceptable and is found in numerous patents. Thus, it is expected that this rejection will now be withdrawn.

All of the claims were rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of the Jensen et al. and Ketels references; although, as recognized by the Examiner, the prior art was not applied relative to claim 18 in the body of the rejection and the prior does not disclose "a conveyor belt which is turned into a U-shape in a direction traverse to the conveying direction, laterally outer edge portions of the conveyor belt being supported on oppositely angled sets of rollers," such as shown in Fig. 9 of this application.

Furthermore, as pointed out at the interview, the lower edges of Ketels conveyor belts 2.1 are not adjacent since convex supports 2.3 are disposed between them and produce a convex conveying surface that yield a W shape not a U or V shape, not to mention that supports 2.3 do not have an "upper belt surface." Thus, it was submitted that there are no "conveying belt surfaces of laterally adjacent conveyors" and Ketels' configuration in a traverse direction of the conveying direction is not formed by collective conveying belt surfaces of the conveyors.

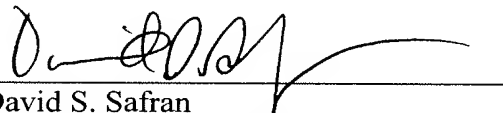
Still further, it was pointed out that it would not be obvious to apply the conveying arrangement 2.1, 2.3 in place of the conveyor 2 of Jensen et al. because it would decrease the utility of Jensen et al.'s device. That is, Jensen et al.'s apparatus is designed to cut a variety

of meat and fish products (what appear to be a chicken breast filet being shown in the drawings), but the conveyor of Ketels is designed specifically for whole fish from which the head and bones have been removed, the convex supports 2.3 being specifically designed to enter into the stomach cavity of the fish body as shown in Fig. 3. Thus, it was asserted that it would not be obvious to replace the general utility conveyor of Jensen et al. with the limited utility conveying arrangement of Ketels.

Thus, on the one hand, Ketels's conveying arrangement is unsuitable for Jensen's meat and fish utility purposes, and on the other hand, as pointed out above, is different from that presently claimed. Therefore, not only is the proposed combination of the Jensen et al. and Ketels references unobvious, but any resulting device would be different from that claimed, so that reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection based upon these references is in order and is requested.

While this application should now be in condition for allowance, in the event that any issues should remain after consideration of this response which could be addressed through discussions with the undersigned, then the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Safran', written over a horizontal line.

David S. Safran
Registration No. 27,997

Customer No. 25570

Roberts Mlotkowski & Hobbes P.C.
P.O. Box 10064
McLean, VA 22102

Direct Telephone: (703) 584-3273